



VOL 7: ISSUE 12



MESSAGE FROM SHERIFF HERNANDEZ

As I look back on 2023, an underlying theme emerges; the steadfast drive and determination of the men and women who serve Travis County here at TCSO. I'd like to take this opportunity to speak to them in this message.

When I wrote my year-end message in 2022, we were hard-pressed by staffing shortages and looking for ways to mitigate last-minute holdovers while recruiting as many new hires as possible. In 2023, we implemented new strategies with corrections schedules that virtually eliminate holdovers but require overtime on a weekly basis. TCSO, you stood up and firmly allowed the plan to work.

The Travis County Commissioners Court approved a strong budget for digital marketing campaigns, then added funding mid-year to expand our reach across Texas. That effort tripled the number of people coming to our [career interest page](#). Our team of recruiters and HR personnel put in tireless hours of work, connecting with candidates, and assisting them through the hiring process. But no effort was as meaningful or successful as our own staff. TCSO employees have proven themselves the very best at identifying people who are a great fit for this agency.

In 2023, we saw some of the highest hiring numbers TCSO has had in decades. We still have a significant number of employees eligible for retirement in the coming months and years, but for the last several months, we've seen the number of new hires surpass the number of retirements

and resignations.

In this issue, you'll read about many of the ways in which TCSO served our community during the holiday season. The willingness to serve others is a common character trait amongst TCSO employees and it's something I greatly appreciate and admire.



As we embark on 2024 together, I challenge you to keep the momentum going. Keep your focus on ways to take care of others. The old saying "It's more blessed to give than to receive" stands the test of time because it's true. I hope you'll join me in an effort to put that notion to the test and put your heart out there to help others throughout 2024.

Thank you for all you do to make TCSO the amazing place it is! And thank you, Travis County for your steadfast support and appreciation of these exceptional men and women.

CAROLS & COCOA WITH COPS



On December 19th, TCSO hosted Carols & Cocoa with Cops at The Domain...Right next to Santa! We were joined by Travis County Precinct 5 Constable Carlos Lopez and officers, Travis County Precinct 2, the Austin Police Department, and the Pflugerville Police Department. It was quite the performance with lots of laughs from the audience, and we really enjoyed the community singing along with us. We had a great time celebrating the holidays over carols & hot cocoa with everyone. From all of our agencies - Happy Holidays!



Your generosity allowed [Brown Santa](#) to serve 2,600 families (approximately 10,000 children) this year. Over 4,900 volunteers wrapped presents, loaded trucks, helped manage our warehouse operations and made the delivery days run without a hitch. Tens of thousands of toys, food and cash donations allowed volunteers to fill every box with items that will surely provide assistance, and a dose of Christmas cheer. You came through for the needy in our community again this year and we offer a heartfelt thank you!

NAACP RECOGNITION



At the [Austin NAACP's](#) 58th Annual Freedom Fund Banquet, the [TCSO Building Bridges program](#) was honored with an Organization Leadership Award. Led by the Community Outreach Unit, Building Bridges hosts engaging community conversations, providing information on resources available from various organizations and establishing a regular dialogue through virtual meetings. Pictured are Sheriff Hernandez with Nelson Linder, President of the Austin Chapter of the NAACP, and Austin Police Department Interim Chief Robin Henderson, recipient of the Captain Louie White Award.

MURCHISON ES SCIENCE FAIR



On December 7th, our Community Outreach Unit and Detectives had a great time judging the creative science projects at the Murchison Elementary School Science Fair. We look forward to this annual event where we can engage with kids in a positive, fun environment. And these students are a smart bunch - taught us a new thing or two!

RONALD McDONALD HOUSE



For many years, TCSO Corrections Officer Olie Pope has made a personal effort to support the [Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Texas](#) by providing toy donations. The Ronald McDonald House provides lodging and support services to families with critically ill and injured children. This year, TCSO joined Officer Pope hosting a toy donation drive. With full hearts, we delivered the donations to Ronald McDonald Representative Rebekah Beveridge. Thanks to Officer Pope for spearheading this toy drive and to all staff members who contributed with toy donations!

SHOP WITH A COP



On December 16th, TCSO was invited by the Elgin Police Department and the Elgin Juneteenth Organization to participate in their annual Shop with a Cop event at the Elgin Walmart. This year, around 60 kids and their families were provided with individual gift cards so that they could go on a shopping spree, each assigned their own member of law enforcement as their personal shopper. TCSO was honored to join Elgin PD, Elgin Juneteenth, Texas DPS, Bastrop County Constable Pct. 4, and the Bastrop County Sheriff's Office bringing countless smiles to these great families.



Congratulations to our recent retirees! Thank you for your dedicated service to this agency and the citizens of Travis County. We wish you the best of luck in your new adventures.

- Jeffrey Butt – 33 yrs. of service
- Michael Edwards – 31 yrs. of service
- Ben Medrano – 30 yrs. of service
- William Gilbert – 29 yrs. of service
- Laura Town – 27 yrs. of service
- Howard Kimball – 26 yrs. of service
- Linda Keese – 24 yrs. of service
- Jose Ortiz – 21 yrs. of service
- Jovita Dillon – 20 yrs. of service
- Randall Proffitt – 15 yrs. of service
- Alley Rizvi – 14 yrs. of service
- Ricky Hunter – 8 yrs. of service

CONSERVE
TRAVIS COUNTY

Christmas Tree Recycling

FREE DROP OFF
December 26th-January 10th
7 AM-5 PM

DISPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

ALL ORNAMENTS, DECORATIONS, LIGHTS, AND TREE STRANDS REMOVED
NO NAILS, SCREWS, STAPLES, WIRE, OR METAL
NO TREES SPRAYED WITH FLOCKING OR ARTIFICIAL SNOW
DO NOT PLACE TREE IN A "TREE BAG" OR ANY PLASTIC
NO NETTING OR ROPE WRAPPED AROUND TREE
TREES TALLER THAN 6 FT MUST BE CUT IN HALF

DROP-OFF LOCATIONS

Citizen Collection Center
2625 Woodall Dr
Leander, TX 78615

East Service Center
6011 Blue Bluff
Austin, TX 78724

Del Valle Softball Complex
3614 FM 973
Del Valle, TX 78617

Northeast Metro Park
15500 Sun Light Near Way
Pflugerville, TX 78660

West Service Center
4501 FM 620
Austin, TX 78732

FOR RETAILERS AND BULK DISPOSAL SEE BACK OF FLYER FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION